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ABSTRACT

The teaching activities presented in this issue are intended to enhance literature instruction for students in grades 5-9. The activities include those specifically designed for use with "The Diary of Anne Frank," "Johnny Tremain," "The Contender," "No Promises in the Wind," and "Farenheit 451." The journal also contains general activities centered around reading strategies, book reports, searching for identity, group discussions, characterization, point of view, use of popular music or poetry, and creating students' own books. (DF)

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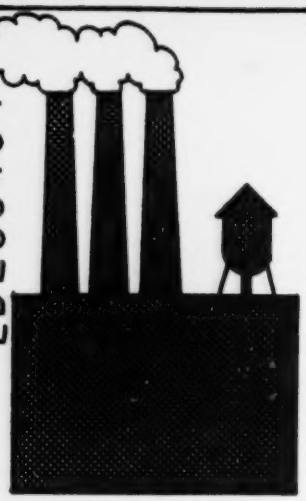

The Idea Factory

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for junior high & middle school

Winter/Spring 1985

CS 209584

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Do you have a successful teaching idea for students in grades 5-9? Strategies must be described from a practical base rather than a theoretical one, although brief theory pieces will be considered. Include handouts given to students if applicable. Queries accepted. Length 750-2000 words.

Submit to: Jere Hochman
or
Sue Neier
c/o Parkway East Junior High
181 Coeur de Ville Drive
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141

Recognize this scenario:

"Tardy!"
"But, I was talking to Mr. Cy N. Steacher about radioactivity and the affect of neutron propulsion on atoms in space."
"Where's your pass?"
"He didn't give me one. Please don't count this as unexcused. Really, I was talking with him about school. I wasn't just taking my time doing nothing."
"I know Science is important, but English is life. It is dreams and it is survival. You need to be here on time, not just for you but for everyone in this class and me, too!"

The dilemma -- "Excused or Unexcused?"

****

This double issue of The Idea Factory is well beyond it's deadline. Excused or Unexcused? GUILTY as charged. But we now have a new editor who can prevent these lost deadlines from taking place. Send us your articles! Send us your ideas! We'll send you, on time, a quality Idea Factory.

Jere Hochman

Editor: Sue Neier
Cover Design: Larry Lisitano

The Diary of Anne Frank

The following is a writing extension to be used with the study of The Diary of Anne Frank.

ASSIGNMENT:

Pretend that a foreign country has lauched a surprise invasion of the United States. Enemy soldiers are seeking all American civilians to send them to concentration camps to be brainwashed by enemy intelligence officers.

Write a diary account of your experience, beginning with the day of the enemy invasion. Date each entry. Conclude your diary in a reasonable, credible way. Consider, for example, such possibilities as:

defeating the enemy, or
being captured and being sent to a concentration camp, or
your family and friends surviving the camp, or
you and/or your family hiding out from the enemy
(if so, receiving help from whom and
in what manner?), or .....

SAMPLE COMPOSITIONS - Selected entries

Feb. 28, 1982

The Russians have captured us! Lori is screaming and crying. Angie killed a Russian soldier when they first came into the school. An explosion ripped through the school after they came, killing Mr. McClearn and others. Lori and Angie escaped in the confusion after the explosion. Kevin, Victor, And I are the only ones left. Kevin was shot when he tried to escape. Victor and I are plotting an escape. We will not die.

Feb. 29, 1982

They were starting to leave when we sneaked out. Victor's gun gave us away. It flashed in the sunlight. The Russians tried to kill us, but, luckily, they are very bad shots. We killed five before getting to the woods. Kevin is being taken to a concentration camp. We pray for him. They are after us. I have to stop now because we have to keep running.

For further information on this unit dealing with Anne Frank, the holocaust, etc., and the various extensions involved, please contact:

English Department Chairman
Hidden Valley Junior High School
4902 Hidden Valley School Road, S.W.
Roanoke, VA 24018

Introduction:

Historical fiction is a story of past events and characters, based in part on historical data. Historical characters and events provide the setting, activate the plot, and control the destinies of the fictional characters. Any historical novelist attempts to reproduce life as it was actually lived in the time of which she writes. This does not mean that she must tell the truth in the same way a historian does, for she manipulates chronology and events to meet the demands of her plot; however, the historical fiction writer never substitutes fact for fiction.

Concept:

The stage for Johnny Tremain is 1775 Boston, a city on the verge of revolt. This commercial center is the gathering ground for the prominent citizens of the American Revolution. These are men who see the growing resistance against England's tyranny as the birth of American democracy. The mounting tension between Bostonians and British soldiers ignites the fuse of rebellion that leads to that fateful day on Lexington Common when war explodes across the land.

Purpose:

John Tremain introduces us to certain men who were very famous in their day and by no means forgotten now. It is hard to imagine the American Revolution without Sam Adams and his political genius. John Adams was, as you know, the second President of the United States. Of course, we cannot forget Paul Revere, whom we remember for the ride he took on the eighteenth of April in seventy-five. As we watch the drama of that long magnificent fight unfold through Johnny's eyes, we also become participants in the greatest chapter in our history, the American Revolution ... Esther Forbes

JOHNNY TREMAIN CONT.

Required Activities:

1. Read Johnny Tremain and participate in class discussions.
2. Complete Newspaper Activities.
3. Complete group project: The Newspaper

****

Newspaper Activities

1. Write a news article about an event that precedes the Revolutionary War. The news article will include a headline, a summary lead, and major and minor details. (eg. Boston Tea Party, Intolerable Acts, Sugar Act, Stamp Act, Tea Act, Quartering Act, or Battle of Lexington.)

2. Dear Abby Letter

   A. Write a "Dear Abby" letter from Cilla. Express her confusion and unhappiness about Johnny's change of attitude towards her since he began working for the "Boston Observer."

   B. Write A "Dear Cilla" letter from Abby which offers advice about how Cilla can rekindle her friendship with Johnny.

3. Draw a political cartoon illustrating the colonists' dissatisfaction with England's policies of government.

4. Create an advertisement in the Want Ad section soliciting a gun for a desperate minuteman.

5. Draw a newsreel of the Boston Tea Party. Your newsreel will have five colorful scenes with captions.

6. Construct a word search or crossword puzzle using twelve words from Johnny Tremain.

7. Write a "Letter-to-the-Editor" expressing your dissatisfaction with the British for closing the Boston harbor. Write your letter from the viewpoint of a Tory merchant who is being financially ruined by the British government.

8. Write obituaries for Rab and Pumpkin. Included in your obituaries will be biographical sketches and epitaphs about the causes and results of their deaths.

9. Write an editorial condemning or defending the Revolutionary War. Use the deaths of Rab and Pumpkin as examples to support your argument. The editorial will be written from Johnny Tremain's point of view.

Group Members:_____

Revolution Unit _____

Period _____

PICTORIAL NEWSPAPER PAGE Due Date _____

		Points	Score
I.	Format		
	A. Poster Board: Includes masthead, ear, date, headlines and bylines	5	_____
	B. Line appears three inches from bottom of page. Within space is title and author	5	_____
II.	Information - includes a minimum of five of the following, each creatively written by students based on factual information from book:		
	A. News Article	10	_____
	B. Feature Story: or Second News Article	10	_____
	C. Letter to the editor	10	_____
	D. Editorial	10	_____
	E. Dear Abby letter	10	_____
	F. Cartoon Strip and/or Political Cartoon	10	_____
	G. Crossword Puzzle or word search	10	_____
III.	Appearance of Illustration		
	A. Quality and neatness of illustrations	5	_____
	B. Well written caption for illustration	5	_____
IV.	Appearance of Newspaper Page		
	A. Typed or printed in ink	5	_____
	B. Resembles front page of newspaper..	5	_____
	Total Points	100	
	Your Total Score		_____

Coauthors: Sally Stoddard, Parkway East Junior High
181 Coeur de Ville Drive
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141

Sheila Ott, Jefferson Middle School
1115 Crescent Drive
Champaign, Illinois 61820

READING STRATEGIES

(From Reading, How To, Herbert Kohl, Bantam Books, 1973)
Materials: scissors, index cards, paper cement, newspapers, magazines

Use these materials for card games as well as found poetry. For example, students could cut out phrases from the newspaper and paste them on index cards.

year of the rat	a threat of	officials protest
back for more	games in Oakland	today's
the busing issue	your land	the life of a
is	America's largest	warning on fussing
at ease in	dreams next year	attack

Deal out cards and build up a poem or statement by having the first person lay down one of the cards. The next person would add a card from his or her hand either before, after, above, or below the previous one and so on around the circle until all the cards were laid out. This is a non-competitive game -- there are no winners. Everyone works together to make a collective statement. Then the whole poem/statement can be pasted on a large sheet of paper, or the cards can be picked up, reshuffled, and another "poem" made. You don't have to cut words out of a newspaper. Blank index cards can be used in the dame way. Pass out five cards to each person, ask them to put any words they want on the cards, collect them, shuffle them, then deal them out again. Poems can be generated in this way and people get a chance to practice composing with words while playing the game. The variations are only limited by your imagination!

ANOTHER IDEA!!

The Guinness Book of World Records, an almanac, Dictionary of Misinformation, or similar books are always good to have around since most people are curious about records, facts, and figures. Guessing games, quizzes, etc. can be developed. There is also useful information in these books and many uses can be found for them.

YET ANOTHER IDEA!!!

The newspaper is an invaluable tool. It is especially useful in the teaching of the concept of sequence. Stories may be cut out into sentence "chunks" and students may reconstruct the story from the pieces. The same idea can be used with comic strips, cutting them out, pasting them on cardboard and then cutting up the strip itself. What happened first, second, third? At this point students may attempt to create an original comic strip.

ALSO USEFUL.....

**A stamp set - Students enjoy making their own signs and posters.
**Stencils - Again, something ususual and it gives incentive.
**A Dymo label maker -- Label everything in the room!
**Blank tags and labels -- Less expensive than the label maker and accomplishes the same purpose.
**Speedball pens and lettering charts -- not only promote meticulous writing, but also emphasize the visual beauty of print.
**Typewriters - especially with interchangeable balls.
**Tape recorders - Can be used to record stories that can later be copied down and read. It can also enable students to hear their reading voice and practice reading aloud. Books and stories may be recorded so that students may listen while following along with the written text. Also, if the stories are read well, this may very well promote interest in reading! Why not add some sound effects--great for Halloween!

Barbara Paterson
George H. Moody Middle School
7800 Woodman Rd.
Richmond, VA. 23228

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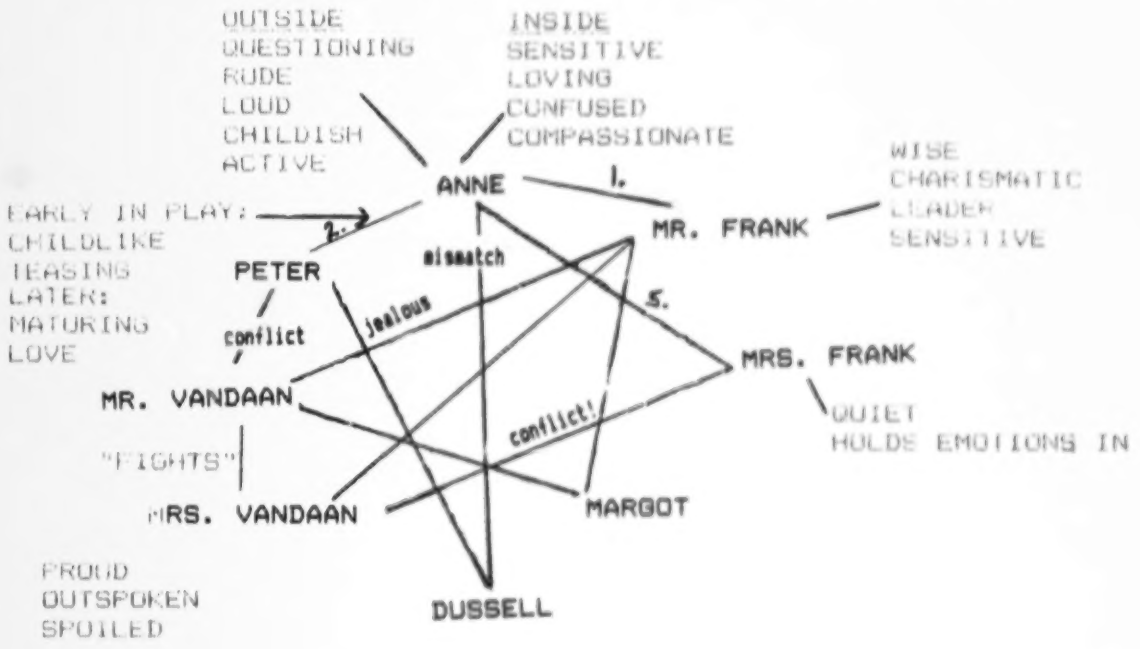
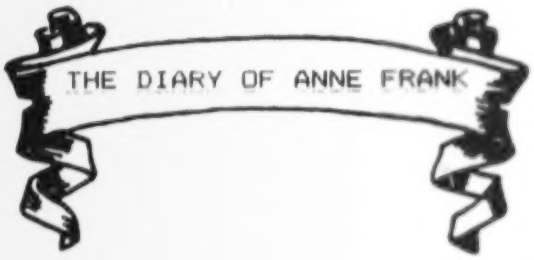
THE CHARACTER STAR

Listing each character's traits, behaviors, and values early in the reading allows students to anticipate relationships and predict conflicts. Changes in relationships can be discussed as more characteristics are revealed. Stars can be drawn to chart plot (see The Diary of Anne Frank below), to highlight settings (see The Contender below), to illustrate theme (see Fahrenheit 451 below), or much, much more.



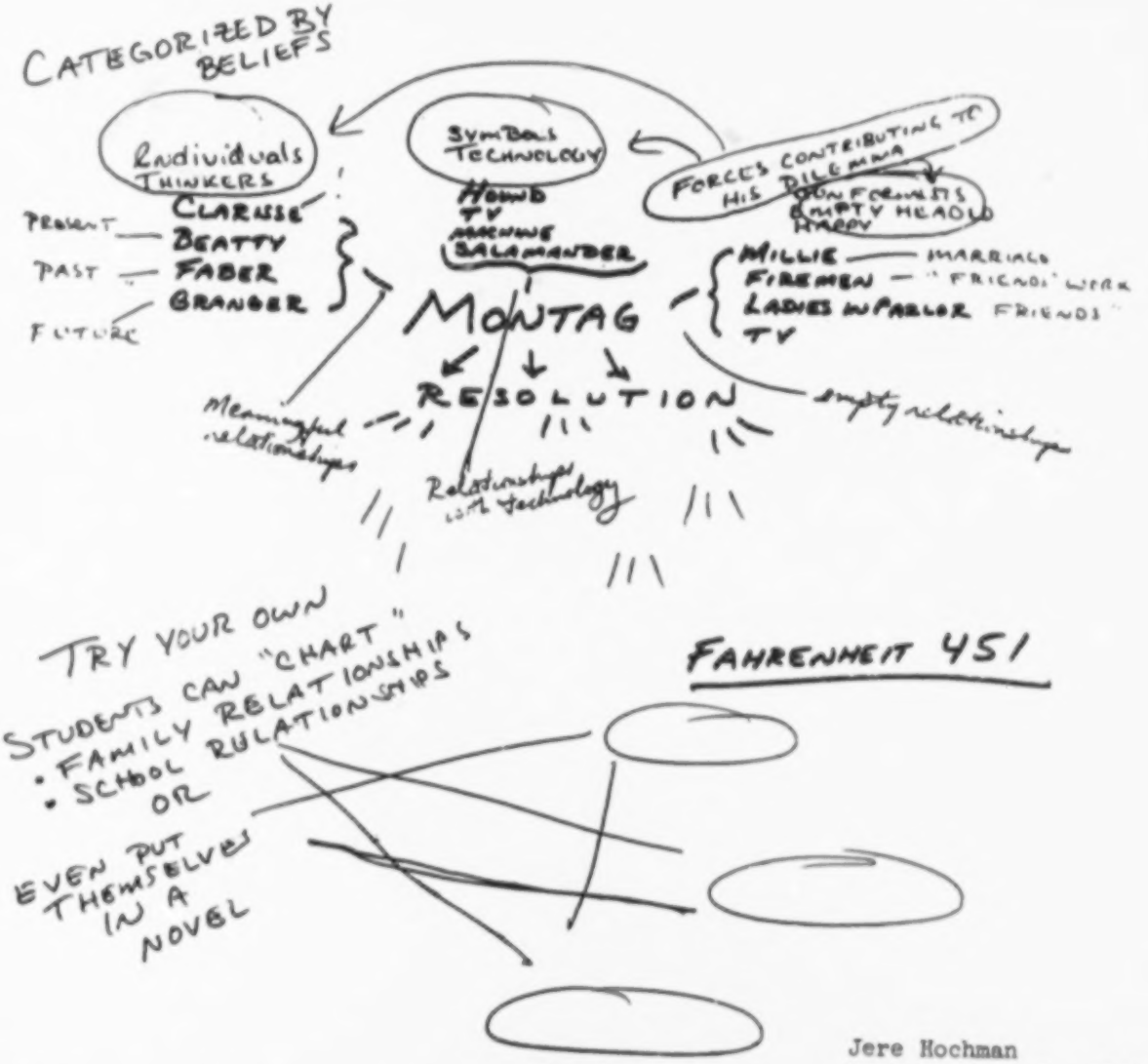
PLOT

1. MR. F GIVES ANNE DIARY
2. ANNE TEASES PETER
5. "WHY CAN'T YOU BE LIKE MARGOT?"



IDEAS:

BULLETIN BOARDS
WORK SHEET
NOTETAKING STARTER
DISCUSSION STARTER
LECTURE AID
VALUES ACTIVITY
ETC, ETC, ETC



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Jere Hochman
Parkway East Jr. High

ROLEPLAYING

NO PROMISES IN THE WIND

After reading the novel,

Goals-1) Students will identify with the characters and the interaction between characters well enough to imagine how these characters would respond in certain situations.

2) Students will work cooperatively and creatively in small groups.

Objectives: After reading the novel, rereading a specific section, and reading the assigned "situation", a small group of students will

1) decide who will role play each part
2) brainstorm at least 3 things each character will say
3) brainstorm at least 3 things each character will do
4) determine if such actions and dialogue fit the characters and the situation.
5) decide a plan for their role-playing situation, including a believable ending.
6) practice performing theimprovizational skit
7) perform in front of the class
8) provide evaluation-including praise and constructive criticism of their own skit and those of other students.

Time Frame:

These role playing situations may be performed after the class has read the entire novel or the skits may be spread out over a one or two-week interval as students complete the reading of certain chapters. The role-playing exercise may also be used as a culminating activity in conjunction with various other activity options (poster, poem, letter, collage, etc..)

Advice to teachers:

1) Be sure students in each group can identify character traits and support their assumption with evidence fro the book.
2) Help students identify the conflict or tension necessary to make each role playing situation a mini-drama.

Roleplaying [Cont.]

MR. STEFAN GRONDOWSKI, MRS. MARY GRONDOWSKI (reread pp. 26-30)

1. Mr. Grondowski blew up when Josh asked if there were more potatoes, but then he stalked outside. Mrs. Grondowski tried to defend her husband's actions, but Josh was too angry and hurt to be sympathetic to his father's harsh words and despondent moods. Josh realized that his mother was torn between love for him and loyalty to her husband. She reluctantly agreed that it would be better for Josh to leave home.

   Later that night Josh and Joey joined Howie and they began their journey away from Chicago.

   Create a scene which shows the tension the next morning between Mr. and Mrs. Grondowski when they realize the boys are gone. Kitty will overhear their conversation and join in.

2. MR. GRONDOWSKI, MRS. GRONDOWSKI, KITTY (reread Ch. 1)

   Josh and Joey have been gone over a week. Create a dinner conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Grondowski as they argue about what to do to find the boys.

3. (Ch.2, pp.31-37) JOSH, JOEY, HOWIE

   Now that the three boys have a little money in their pockets and are feeling confident with their new venture, create a scene between Josh, Joey and Howie as they sit under the steps of a stairway leading up to an el platform. Consider some of their hopes, expectations, memories, wants, ne-ds, fears, concerns, etc..

4. JOSH, JOEY, POLICEMAN'S WIFE (reread Ch.3)

   Recreate the conversation of the brothers in the jail cell where they spent the night after the gang of boys attacked them in their camp and stole their potatoes, blanket and clothes. Josh and Joey will probably be talking about the day's experiences and their current dilemma. In the midst of the conversation, the policeman's wife brings the boys cups of hot chocolate.

5. LONNIE, BESSIE, CARNIVAL MAN, CARNIVAL LADY

   In chapter 4, Bessie Jenkins, a waitress at a restaurant, tells Lonnie and the boys about Pete Harris' carnival in Baton Rouge. (p.79-80) Bessie was impressed with Josh's talent and said Pete may give him a job.

   Reread pages 88-93 which tell about Pete giving a job to Josh. Assume that Lonnie returned to the restaurant on his way back to Omaha and told Bessie, the waitress, about what happened since they last talked.

   A man and a lady are also in the restaurant but they are headed north after losing their jobs in another carnival which folded in New Orleans. Show how the hard luck of the carnival man and lady may make Lonnie and Bessie more concerned about Josh and Joey.

Roleplaying {Cont.}

6. Ch.5 BLEGAN, BLEGAN'S WIFE, EDWARD C., FLORRIE (OTHERS POSSIBLE)

Josh and Joey have been with the carnival a week or two. At breakfast one morning, Blegan, his wife, Edward C. and Florrie are at one table talking about the boys and Pete's decision to hire them.

Create the discussion or argument that may result from their various personalities and their perception of Pete, Josh and Joey. (You may choose a student to play Emily, Josh, Joey or Pete to join in.)

7. Ch.6and 7 up to p.133 EDWARD C., EMILY, BLEGAN, BLEGAN'S WIFE

Edward C. Kensington couldn't bear to see Josh and Joey leave so he wrote them a note which Blegan delivered.

Create a scene later that afternoon when Edward C. meets up with Emily and they share their concerns about Josh and Joey. Then have Blegan and his wife find them, interrupt, and put in their two cents worth.

8. Ch. 7 p. 136-143 CHARLEY, JOSH, WAITRESS, POLICE OFFICER

Create a scene at the restaurant with Charley bragging to Josh and Joey in fromt of the waitress. When a policeman enters and asks about the car that's parked outsice, what happens?

9. Ch. 7 p.144-147 JOSH, JOEY, COBBLER, "SHERRIF"

Reread this section carefully. Then recreate the scene in which Josh and Joey enter the cobbler's shop to buy a pair of overshoes. The man who waits on them and the "gray rabbitlike" man (the "sherrif") will continue their dialogue after the boys leave.

Be sure you understand the cobbler's motive and his personality and make a believable ending.

Rhonda Coleman

Parkway South Junior High School
760 Woods Mill Road
Manchester, Missouri 63011

CREATIVE BOOK REPORTING

NEWSPAPER

1. Headline the main idea of the novel

2. Imagine that you are a reporter and report your novel as a record-breaking headline story. Use a newspaper style for your write up as you tell the characters' actions.

3. Include the following:

   Main Idea
   Descriptive Language (to hold reader's interest)
   Specific, Important Details (facts)

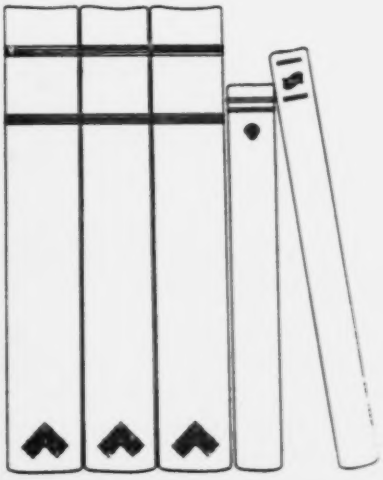
4. You may try to influence the reader's opinion by the use of:

   [It would seem,]
   [There is a possibility, etc]

5. * You cannot report an opinion as a fact!*

6. * Facts must be documented (verified) by the novel.

T.V. or RADIO NEWSCASTER



1. Dramatically headline (in caption form) the main idea of the novel. (One sentence.) You may use a visual.

2. You are a T.V. news commentator reporting this exciting event as a fast paced, record breaking news event. Include characters' names and actions in your report. Remember you are working against a time limit.

3. A news commentator will use:

   Repetition (to sell the main idea)

   Colorful, descriptive language (to catch and hold the listener's interest.

4. You may try to influence the viewer's opinion by means of the following phrases:

   [It appears to this reporter that,]
   [A strong possibility is indicated ...,]
   [One might assume, etc.]

5. * Remember, you cannot report opinion as fact!*

6. All facts must be verified (documented) by the novel.

7. * You may opt to be a radio reporter and newscaster, rather than a T.V. newscaster. Follow the same format, but remember you will only be heard, rather that both seen and heard. *

Kay Sandweiss
Parkway East Junior High School
181 Coeur de Ville Drive
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141

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SEARCH FOR IDENTITY

ADOLESCENT NOVEL
THEMATIC UNIT

ADOLESCENT NOVEL
THEMATIC UNIT

INTRODUCTION: Have you ever wanted to change your name? Have you become impatient waiting for your hidden talents to surface? Have you ever wondered why you don't have the same sweet disposition your sister has? You are not alone in your confusion about who you are and why you behave as you do. Each of us struggles to increase our self-awareness and to confirm our self-identity.

CONCEPT: Every individual is special, with unique qualities and characteristics. Each of us is an extension of our personal and shared experiences in life. From our traditions and heritage, to our personalities and values, we are as individualistic as our fingerprints.

PURPOSE: This learning activity will initiate an awareness of your own identity. You will realize you are as unique an individual as the characters you meet in literature.

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES:

1. Read the assigned novel and complete the assigned work.
2. Participate in class discussion.
3. Complete the project, "What's In A Name?"

What's In A Name?

		Possible Points	Score
I.	Format		
	A. Mounted on posterboard	10	____
	B. Completed in ink or typed	10	____
	C. Heading	10	____
	1. Your name		
	2. Definition of your name		
	3. Date of birth		
II.	Crest		
	A. Symbolic of personality, interests, and family background	10	____
	B. Personal Moto	10	____
III.	Astrological Chart		
	A. Personality chart	10	____
	B. Bar or Line Personality Graph (Positive and Negative Traits)	10	____
	C. Illustration of Astrological Sign	10	____
IV.	Quality of Appearance		
	1. Crest	5	____
	2. Graph	5	____
	3. Chart	5	____
	4. Astrological sign	5	____
	Final score		

Sally Stoddard, East Junior High School
181 Coeur de Ville Drive
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141

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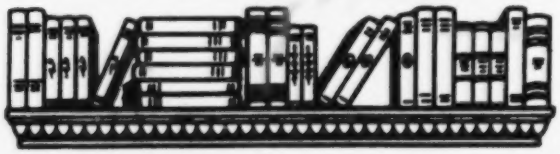
TALKING ABOUT BOOKS



The TALKING ABOUT BOOKS program employs the methods and techniques of the Junior Great Books Foundation, using any book deemed appropriate for the group or for the purpose the teacher selects. The discussions are held in heterogeneously grouped classes. No more than twelve to fifteen children and one adult leader are included in a discussion group.

No attempt is made to summarize or in any way cover the entire book. Instead, a few main ideas or themes are examined thoroughly. Boys and girls are given the opportunity to express their opinions about reflective questions carefully conceived and posed by the leader, and to listen to what other students have to say. The leader does not offer any answers nor does he react in any way to suggest that a student's response was "right" or "wrong" (difficult at first); his role is to ask questions. The children may ask questions, too, but only other boys and girls may offer answers.

" As a librarian, I notice an increased interest in the books discussed and others by the same authors. I believe the program stimulates independent reading of library books."

"The biggest benefit I have noticed is the success our usual 'poor readers' have with this program. These students experience success along with the rest of the group. These students also have some of the best interpretations in our discussions."

"The program re-emphasized the idea of reading for more than facts and plot. The students have gained life-long skills in listening, discussing, and enjoying literature as it applies to the way they think."

"I can say that the TALKING ABOUT BOOKS program has turned fifty-five lowly motivated eighth graders into readers-discussers. Quite honestly I am amazed when I see them wide-eyed in reading and actively discussing these stories. Speaking as a "program-Weary" teacher, it flat works!"

PARTIAL BOOK LIST

BANNER IN THE SKY
THE BLACK PEARL
CALL IT COURAGE
THE CONTENDER
DAVE'S SONG
DIBS IN SEARCH OF SELF
DORP DEAD
EDGAR ALLAN
FIREWEED
GENTLEHANDS
I HEARD THE OWL CALL MY NAME
JULIE OF THE WOLVES
JACOB HAVE I LOVED
THE LEMMING CONDITION
THE LOTTERY ROSE
MY BROTHER SAM IS DEAD
ROLL OF THUNDER HEAR MY CRY
THE 79 SQUARES
A SMART KID LIKE YOU
A SWIFTLY TILTING PLANET
TEACUP FULL OF ROSES
TOBY, GRANNY AND GEORGE
TUCK EVERLASTING
THE WAVE
WHERE THE LILIES BLOOM
THE WITCH OF BLACKBIRD POND

THERESA LIPPINCOTTE
Parkway School District

Characterization

It is important to use action words and phrases when describing characters in works of literature. Look through the words below. Choose at least five words that describe your character for each category below. You may also use words which are not listed below.

enthusiastic competent organized motivated effective responsible

assertive a risk taker a fast learner trustworthy

Attitudes

a trainer
talented
a leader
dedicated
efficient
dynamic
reliable
skilled
punctual

Personality

cooperative an administrator a generalist design

a problem solver a coordinator a manager an achiever

a willing worker a developer a specialist a motivator

solid
successful
intensive
consistent
specific
plan
conceive
supervise
interview

Behaviors

budget summarize

competent extensive

write compose work well with others develop

create delegate understand implement train

copy
poise
divert
hire
fire
serve
help
trust
drive

Skills

Physical Features

Point of View

One method that I have found to be effective in correlating writing with the teaching of literature is to assign to my students what I call a point of view write. After reading and discussing a particular short story, (I try to pick stories with provocative characters for this exercise) I will then assign a point of view write to my students. Each student must pick a particular character in the story and write a three paragraph essay from that character's point of view. The issue the students are responding to is broad enough in theme to allow for scope and in depth perception in order to communicate the chosen character's viewpoint. This must be realistic (in keeping with the time scope of the story) and believable in the historical sense as well. For example, a favorite write of mine deals with the short story, "The Three Royal R's." This story deals fictionally with the young Thomas Jefferson and his budding democratic idealism, i.e. schooling for all. I prefer to have my students perform it as a play. After the performance, a class discussion is initiated. The different characters are brought up for a final viewing before the write is assigned. The students are free to select the character of their choice, young Tom, the schoolmaster, the slave, any of the other students in the story, the apprentice and would-be student, his widowed non-reading mother, the constable, the apprentice master, etc. etc. The theme of the write is broad in scope. The students are asked to respond to the issue of taxation in the colonies so that all of the young people may be educated in basic reading and writing. Each student is to respond from his or her viewpoint and perception of what it will mean personally to them and their lifestyle. This is one write in which opinions are not only solicited, but welcome. The student writer however must stay in character and be believable. Another favorite technique of mine is to have the student authors "read" their paper assuming the responsibility for the characterization of their chosen role. I feel this adds yet another dimension to their demonstrable skill abilities and as a teaching technique is quite invaluable, for responsible student interaction generates a higher level of motivation, interest, and finally learning.

Many short stories and plays lend themselves to this technique. Why not pick one and try it soon?

Kay Sandweiss
Parkway East Junior High School
181 Coeur de Ville Drive
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141

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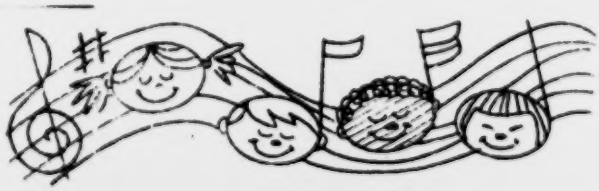
NOVEL IDEAS FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL

The following are some creative ideas I have utilized sucessfully in teaching the novel to eighth grade students. Since young people everywhere are so currently tied in to the prevailing music of the day I often use modern music to tie in the mood or to set the tone of the novel I am about to teach. Almost all modern "pop" music is somewhat repetitious and carries a heavily accented beat. Therefore it is easy to pick up on catchy, often repeated phraseology and/or chorus refrain. Often the title alone will convey the message, and for sheer diversity in approach listening to a few minutes of a taped rendition of a popular song is a novel way to command student interest and attention. For my needs as a Unified Studies Teacher in a junior high school, I find "The Police," "Bonnie Tyler," and others too numerous to mention to be helpful. For example, in teaching a YA novel of the Civil War genre, I often introduce "I'll be watching you," from the album SYNCHRONICITY by The Police. By letting the students listen to identify the particular refrain, the group performing, and the title, as well as the album, I find that a lively, competitive listening stance is accomplished. From that point on it becomes relatively easy to key in the points I wish to make in reference to the novel and its relationship to the music we have been listening to.

Bonnie Tyler's "Total Eclipse of the Heart" suggests many possible approaches to the theme, tone, and other literary elements one deals with in teaching YA novels. I could explain many, many more song titles and their application to the YA novel, but for some diversity and fun with a new approach why not find your own songs and put them to work in a novel approach to teaching the novel? (Almost any radio station will "TUNE" you in to what the young people are listening to.) Try it. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised with the results.



NOVEL IDEAS FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL

(Cont'd.)

Another idea that I have found to be successful in introducing novel study is the use of poetry. I often attach a copy of a particular poem to the novel packet I am handing out to my students. This helps to build an appreciation of poetry while at the same time setting a tone for the work to be studied. I like to use a variety of poetry, contemporary as well as old favorites. I find too, that many of the same poems can be used for more than one novel and in more than one way. However, I do not do this in the same teaching year, but rather vary the use from year to year. "Dreams" by Langston Hughes is an example of a poem that has a variety of applications to the YA novel. Particular favorites of mine are Langston Hughes, Robert Frost, Shel Silverstein, Nikki Giovanni, William Shakespeare, and a host of others. Poetry, by its very nature, is the art of expressing one's thoughts in a more compact unit of space. I utilize this compactness to encapsulate a wide, wide world of thought and feeling in correlation with the study of YA literature.

Don't overlook the value of poetry as an interdisciplinary approach either. For example, I often utilize "Dreams" to begin the study of early colonization in American history. Another favorite to introduce the study of the Constitution is a poem entitled "New Beginnings." Just as with music, poetry offers a wide variety of selections.

Still another technique that I employ with YA fiction is what I call a special interest corner. This is particularly effective with the historical novel, although it can be used for any novel. At the special interest corner there is either a newspaper (simulated of course) headline or a news article highlighting a controversial issue in the novel, or as an alternative, a little noted issue such as women's rights, which has more historical import in today's world. After calling attention to the special interest issue, I will role play with a previously selected student or students, the concept of the roving reporter in a "You Are There!" vignette. Once again, opinions, feelings, and perceptions are solicited and welcomed. Eventually the whole class is drawn into the discussion and from there it is just a simple matter of generating the interest forward to the proposed novel study. Not only does this work effectively, but as a bonus I find my students taking a much more active part in sharing their perceptions as they in turn devise projects and ideas to share with the class in this novel way of teaching the novel.

Kay Sandweiss
Parkway East Junior High School
181 Coeur de Ville Drive
Creve Coeur, Missouri 63141

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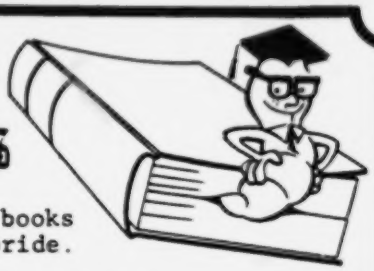

IDEAS FOR CLASS AND INDIVIDUAL BOOKS

My students enjoy making these particular individual books which they share with each other and take home with pride.

1. FAMILY FEATURE--Give the following directions: Using a light color of construction paper, trace around one of your feet (bare). Use this as a pattern, and make five or six more. Draw faces on these to make feet people representing your family members (father, grandmother, sister, dog, cat, aunt, cousin, etc.) On lined paper, draw enough feet pages so that you have at least one for each of your foot people. Write about (description) each of your family members. Make into a book. Be sure that when you write, you leave a margin somewhere (top or left) to staple your book together. OPTIONS: Footnotes, All about Feet--Use foot shapes for covers. Decorate as you like. Write (on foot-shaped, line pages) about feet--their importance in your life, an imaginary foot history, the use of "foot/feet" in familiar expressions (footnotes, foot-long hot dogs, Stand on your own two feet, etc.). Illustrate any way you wish.

2. HALLOWEEN SHAPIES--Covers are provided by shapes dittoed onto a 9"x12" sheet of construction paper, two of the same shape on each sheet. I use an outline of a mask on light purple, a tombstone on gray, a pumpkin on orange, and a ghost on white. These instructions are given: Use your colored shapes as covers (decorated as you please) and also as patterns to cut lined paper to write on. When writing leave a margin somewhere (top or left) to staple book together. Your audience: a group of your friends assembled in a totally darkened room. Your objective: to try to scare the YELL out of your listeners/readers. Suggested topics: poetry about Halloween, ghost story, The Ghost of ....., The Man with the Purple Face, The Purple Mask, The Mask of ....., Halloween Happenings, Here Lies...., Buried in The Grave ...., The -----est Pumpkin (or Ghost). These could, of course, be done for various other holidays.

3. DOT BOOKS--A story is communicated to the reader using only black dot cutouts on white paper (or vice versa). Materials required: stacks of black and white construction paper (large sheets cut into fourths), glue, markers, yarn or brads, hole punch. You might begin by having students brainstorm a list of round objects. Then have them write out a simple story line (perhaps geared to a 5 or 6 year old) and draw out their ideas on a sheet of paper to decide how many pages will be required for the final product. The only rules: illustrations should be limited, as much as possible, to circles or dots, and the story should be limited to one line per page. Relationships between dot characters can be shown by their placement on the page.

For class or group books, each student contributes a page. Teacher of student could design the cover. Make these the size of a full or half sheet of construction paper. Laminate if possible, especially the covers. To bind, use yarn, binder rings, Acco press binders, or brads. A pattern approach is useful here as it gives the book a unifying element and provides an idea for students who need one. The pattern idea need not be confining; it can and will be expanded upon in many ways by eager students--poetry, lists, stories, personal narratives, collages, and drawings all become part of this type of project. Many children's books can provide patterns for imitation or improvisation.

Cont. on pg. 24

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Constitution of the Junior High/Middle School Assembly

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Junior High/Middle School Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English, herein called the Assembly.

Article II. Object

The purposes of this Assembly are to promote communication and cooperation among all individuals interested in the teaching of junior high/middle school English; to promote membership and participation in the secondary and elementary sections of NCTE by JH/MS members; to present programs and conferences on this subject; to promote an increase in the number of articles and publications devoted to it; and to combine and focus the efforts of all those interested in this area of teaching.

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Qualifications

Any individual or group professionally interested in the teaching of JH/MS English is eligible for membership in the Assembly.

Section 2. Dues

Dues shall be determined by the Executive Board. Payment of dues qualifies individuals as voting members.

Article IV. Organization

Section 1. Authority and Composition

The business of the Assembly shall be administered by the Executive Board, which shall have administrative jurisdiction over committees created to further the purposes of the Assembly. The Executive Board shall consist of the officers, standing committee chairs, and directors. All shall be members of NCTE and the JH/MS Assembly while in office.

Section 2. Function

The Executive Board shall have primary responsibility for conducting the business of the Assembly, including determining policies, delegating responsibility, and appropriating funds.

Section 3. Meetings

The Executive Board shall meet prior to the annual business meeting of the Assembly. All Executive Board meetings are closed, except to those invited by the Chair. Other meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair.

Article V. Officers

Section 1. Officers and Terms

The officers of the Assembly shall be the Chair, Associate Chair, Immediate Past Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The term of office shall be one year from the annual business meeting of the Assembly to the next.

Section 2. Chair

The Chair shall preside at all meetings, appoint chairs of all committees, and have charge of conducting the business of the Assembly. The Chair shall also appoint the Secretary and the Treasurer.

Section 3. Associate Chair

The Associate Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair, assist the Chair in the execution of business, serve as Program Chair, and serve as Chair the following year. Should the Chair be unable to complete the term of office, the Associate Chair shall assume that office.

Section 4. Immediate Past Chair

The Immediate Past Chair shall serve as Nominating Committee Chair and assist the in-coming Associate Chair.

Section 5. Secretary

The Secretary shall be appointed by the Chair. The Secretary shall be responsible for all official minutes of the Assembly and the Executive Board.

Section 6. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Chair. The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining the financial records of the Assembly and shall present a written annual report at the annual business meeting.

Section 7. Directors

A. The officers shall be assisted in the governance of the Assembly by four directors. Each will be elected for a term of four years.

B. Terms will be staggered so that one director is elected yearly.

C. Selection of directors should try to reflect geographic distribution; however, interest, willingness to serve and willingness to attend Executive Board meetings are to be considered as more important qualifications.

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE

Section 8. Vacated Office

In the case of any vacated term of office within the Assembly, the Chair shall appoint someone to fill the unexpired position.

Article VI. Meetings

Section 1. Number

The Assembly shall have one annual business meeting. Additional meetings may be held when considered necessary by the Executive Board, provided at least one month's written notice is given each member of the Assembly.

Section 2. Time and Place

The time and place of meetings shall be determined by the Chair. Executive Board members shall be given written notification at least one month in advance, plus the opportunity to add items to the agenda. The final agenda shall be mailed to the Executive Board prior to meetings.

Section 3. Quorum

Those members at any announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Article VII. Nominations and Election of Officers

Section 1. Condition of Nomination

In order for an Assembly member to be nominated for office by the Nominations Committee or by petition, that member must have maintained membership in the Assembly for one year prior to the time of nomination.

Section 2. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of a Chair, who is the Immediate Past Chair of the Assembly, and two other members. It shall be the responsibility of the committee to prepare a slate of two candidates for each vacant office. The nominating committee shall send the slate of candidates to the Chair by April 1.

Section 3. Nomination by Petition

Candidates for any vacancy may be nominated by a membership petition signed by at least 15 members of the Assembly, accompanied by written consent of the person nominated, and submitted to the Nominating Committee Chair before February 1.

Section 4. Balloting

A copy of the ballot shall be mailed to each member no later than September 1. The deadline for returning ballots will be included on the ballot; however, at least three weeks shall be allowed for the return of ballots.

Section 5. Number to Elect to Office

A plurality is required to elect any nominated candidate to office.

Section 6. Assumption of Duties

New officers shall assume their terms of office on the last day of the Annual NCTE Convention.

Article VIII. Committees of the Assembly

Section 1. Standing Committees

The standing committees of the the Assembly shall be the Nominating, Membership, and Publications Committees.

Section 2. Special Committees

Special committees may be appointed by the Chair for special purposes. Special committees exist for one year.

Article IX. Idea Factory Editor

The Editor shall be selected by the Executive Board. The Editor's responsibilities shall include publishing four copies of the Idea Factory annually and serving on the Publications Committee. The term of appointment shall be for a minimum of one year, and the Editor shall receive an annual stipend.

Article X. Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary shall be selected by the Executive Board. The Executive Secretary's responsibilities shall include maintaining a central address for the Assembly, disseminating correspondence and information to the appropriate members of the Executive Board, and maintaining the membership rolls of the Assembly. The term of appointment shall be for a minimum of two years, and the Executive Secretary shall receive an annual stipend.

Article XI. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Rules
Roberts Rules of Order (Revised), in the latest edition, shall govern the Assembly in all cases to which it can be applied and hold consistent with the Constitution of the Assembly.

Section 2. Dissolution
This Assembly can be dissolved by the Board of Directors of NCTE if it becomes inactive or fails to comply with the provisions of the NCTE Constitution.

Article XII. Amendments

Section 1. Requirements
This constitution may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the voting members at the annual business meeting of the Assembly.

Section 2. Proposal by Petition
A proposal to amend this constitution shall be presented to the Chair before the annual business meeting of the Assembly, at which time the suggested amendment(s) will be acted upon.

Junior High/Middle School Assembly 1985 Executive Board

Chair
Jere Hochman
8038 Watkins, Clayton, Missouri 63105

Associate Chair
Larry McGonigal
2445 Kaala Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

Immediate Past Chair
Tate Hudson
1591 Gasche Street, Wooster, Ohio 44691

Secretary
Brad Johnson
427 12th Ave. N.W., New Brighton, MN 55112

Treasurer
Carole Williams
2753 Chalet Hill Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63129

Directors
Anamae H. Hill
7905 Alvarado Road, Richmond, Virginia 23229

Richard Klein (1987)
456 Laurel Street, Youngstown, Ohio 44505

Margaret L. Soli (1986)
19 James Road, Reading, Massachusetts 01867

Joel Turvey (1988)
2533 Pimlico Drive, West Linn, Oregon 97068

Carole Williams (1988)
2753 Chalet Hill Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63129

Executive Secretary
Teddi Baer
P.O. Box 4335, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

IDEAS Cont.

4. ZOOPHABETS--Assign a letter of the alphabet to each student; he makes up an animal, draws it, tells where it lives, what it eats, everything beginning with that assigned letter, i.e.--Glut which lives in garages and garbage cans and eats grease, gaskets, gears, and gasoline by the gallon.

5. ALLITERATION POSTERS--Write a sentence, as long as you can, with all words beginning with the same letter. Full sheet of construction paper, written with markers, illustrated.

6. LANTERNS--Poem arranged in shape of Japanese lantern, shapes cut out and mounted on pages. Structure of syllables in lines gives it a rising and falling feeling. Five lines; syllable count 1,2,3,4,1.

7. NURSERY RHYMES FOR MATURE READERS--Using familiar rhymes and the thesaurus, replace as many words as possible with more sophisticated synonyms. Write final copy on construction paper with markers, illustrate, and bind into a volume.

8. PASS-IT-ON-STORIES--Each student is given a story starter. After writing for ten minutes, the students pass the story to the next person in the row. Stories are read in a few minutes and added to by this second writer. At the end of about 12 minutes, the stories are passed again. This is done until 4-5 students have contributed to each story. Before passing the stories the last time, tell the students that they must now bring the story they are receiving to a conclusion. Some ideas for starters might include: The clock struck thirteen times, He never would guess what I had hidden in my suitcase, She opened her diary and began to write, A dark, cloaked figure appeared at the window, At the bottom of the well I saw...,Herschel's room always grew smaller at night.

Wilma Weisenstein
Belle Valley School
1901 Mascoutah Rd.
Belleville, Il. 62221

Teddi Baer
3740 122nd Avenue, N.E.
Bellevue, Wa. 98005